



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Guidelines for Recycling Containers and Signage for Recyclable Material Collection Services Provided by City Solid Waste Collection Franchisees and Recyclable Materials Collectors

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure the provision of adequate and convenient recycling containers, both in number, type, and location, as well as legible and understandable signage related to the storage and collection of recyclable material in connection with the City Recycling Ordinance. To ensure that the City meets the state mandate under Assembly Bill 939 to divert at least 50 percent of its waste from landfill disposal, “container,” “adequate” and “convenient” are defined below. It is expected that with time and as your recycling program becomes institutionalized, you will be able to adjust your service levels to surpass the 50% goal described herein.

Placement of Recycling Containers/Dumpsters in Waste Disposal Areas:

Definition of “ Container” – Container means a receptacle for collecting and storing recyclable materials pending collection and includes, but is not limited to, cans, dumpsters, chutes, enclosures, automatic lift containers, bins, roll-offs, and other receptacles. A “Recycling Container” refers to a container for recyclable materials. A “Solid Waste Container” refers to a Container for solid waste.

Definition of “Convenient”* - Recycling Containers shall be placed in convenient locations, meaning either at or next to each current Solid Waste Container or disposal area, or as close as possible to these areas and/or high pedestrian traffic areas. Recycling Containers shall be paired with Solid Waste Containers of equivalent volume capacity at each waste disposal area.

Definition of “Adequate”* - In addition to placing Recycling Containers at “Convenient” locations, the following are the minimum recycling collection service levels (by Container volume capacity) considered to be “Adequate”:

Type of Facility	Minimum required ratio of recycling capacity to trash capacity
Multi-Family & Mixed Use Facilities with majority sq. ft. being residential	
50 units or more	40% recycling to 60% trash
Less than 50 units	30% recycling to 70% trash
Commercial & Mixed Use Facilities with majority sq. ft being commercial	
10,000 sq. ft or more	40% recycling to 60% trash
Less than 10,000 sq. ft.	30% recycling to 70% trash
Single Family Residence/Residential Facility	Minimum of one Recycling Container of equal capacity to each refuse container

*Exceptions to the above to be approved on a case by case basis by the Environmental Services Director or designee.

Residential and Commercial Facilities

All persons responsible for providing recycling services for residential, commercial, mixed use, and multi-family facilities shall ensure the provision of on-site Recycling Containers for the collection and storage of recyclable materials that meet the following standards:

Standards for Recycling Containers:

Container Features – All Recycling Containers within the City shall be equipped with close-fitting lids and be leak-proof and rodent-proof.

Cleaning and Maintenance – All City Franchisee or Recyclable Materials Collector shall maintain all of their Recycling Containers used for providing service in the City in a safe, neat, clean, and operable condition at all times.

Container Identification – All Recycling Containers shall be clearly identified as a recyclable materials container and shall display the name and phone number of the Franchisee or Recyclable Materials Collector to whom the Recycling Container belongs.

Container Signage – All Recycling Containers within the City shall display a list of the recyclable materials which may be deposited into the Recycling Container.

Container Location/Placement Within Buildings – Recycling Containers must be placed as follows:

Commercial Facilities and Offices/Commercial Spaces at Multi Family Complexes:

- Place Recycling Containers in staff work rooms and break rooms.
- Recycling Containers must be located next to or in the vicinity of the Solid Waste Containers and be of equivalent volume capacity to the Solid Waste Containers.

Hotels/Motels: 2 options:

- Option 1: place Recycling Containers in each guest room
- Option 2: place “adequate” Recycling Containers (size minimum 23 gal. or higher) on each floor by stairs, elevators, vending machine/ice area, and corners. Recycling Specialist or Code Compliance Officer can recommend number of Recycling Containers per floor based upon each floor plan. It is expected that with time, you will be able to convert to Recycling Containers in each guest room.
- Note: whichever option you choose, you also need to place Recycling Containers in common areas (pool, laundry room, fitness room, lobby, club house, breakfast area, near vending machines, etc), and staff areas, such as offices and break rooms.
- Recycling Containers must be located next to or in the vicinity of the Solid Waste Containers and be of equivalent volume capacity to the Solid Waste Containers.

Storage Area Signage:

The facility owner, operator, manager or other responsible person is responsible for posting and maintaining one sign in each area where recyclable materials are collected and stored. The sign shall display a list of the recyclable materials which may be deposited into the Recycling Container.

Common Area Signage:

The facility owner, operator, manager or other responsible person is responsible for posting and maintaining the following:

- Commercial Facilities and Offices/Commercial Spaces at Multi-Family Complexes: display letter/notice of requirement to participate in the facility’s recycling program in staff areas, and in the public area within leasing office/residential hotel lobby.

- Hotels/Motels: display letter/notice of requirement to participate in the facility's recycling program in office, staff areas, at check-in, and in guest rooms.

Special Events

Recycling receptacles must be provided at community special events that require an event permit from the City of San Diego. The following standards for receptacles and collected material apply:

- The number of recycling receptacles shall equal the number of solid waste receptacles.
- The solid waste and recycling receptacles shall be placed next to one another throughout the event venue.
- The types of recyclable materials suitable for deposit into each recycling receptacle shall include, at a minimum, aluminum and metal cans, and glass and plastic bottles and jars.
- Each recycling receptacle shall be clearly identified as a recycling receptacle and shall display a list of the types of recyclable materials that may be deposited into the receptacle.
- Recyclable materials deposited into the recycling receptacles must be delivered to a recycling facility for recycling, not a landfill for disposal.

Note: This guideline may be reviewed semi-annually and is subject to change when deemed warranted by the Environmental Services Director or designee.

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